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# INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY India

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SUBJECT    Dissension Within the Communist Party of India,  
              Particularly in West Bengal and Assam  
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1. During the last two months the split in the Communist Party in Bengal between Somnath Lahiri's group and Ranen Sen's rump committee\* has widened. The split originated in a difference of opinion over the old Ranadive leadership of the Communist Party of India (CPI). Sen feels that the new CPI leadership, especially in Bengal, represents no significant change, and he does not give Rajeshwar Rao full support. He is demanding that a general congress be held to elect a new Politburo, Central Committee, Provincial Committees and District Committees, and that the higher administrative units be elected by the lower echelons rather than appointed from the top down.\*\*
2. Sen's animosity is primarily directed against Somnath Lahiri. Sen's group is as strong as Lahiri's in Bengal, and is more representative of rank and file opinion. S. A. Dange, at present not in the good graces of the Politburo or the Central Committee, shares Sen's opinion of the present Communist leadership. Sen would probably support Dange against Rao.
3. Lahiri and his followers, Bhabani Sen and Nasrullah Ansari, give full support to Rao. They oppose any general election in the CPI. Hiren Mukherjee is in neither Lahiri's group nor Sen's, but tends more towards the latter.
4. Sen and Jyoti Basu (aka Bose) led a delegation to Rajeshwar Rao in late July or early August. Sen told Rao his group opposed the Central Committee and particularly Lahiri. Rao promised to investigate whether Sen represented the "majority opinion" of Bengal Communists.\*\*\*
5. From 15 August to 13 September the Calcutta police arrested several important Communists, including the following:
  - a. Promode Das Gupta, member of the Bengal Provincial Committee (PC) before the Communist Party was banned in Bengal, a Ranen Sen supporter.
  - b. Abdul Halim, associate of Promode Das Gupta, a Ranen Sen supporter.

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- c. Jyoti Basu (aka Bose) nominal president of the Bengal Provincial Trade Union Congress, head of the Bengal Communist elements among railroad workers, a Ranen Sen supporter.
- d. Niranjana Sen Gupta, member of the former Bengal PC, a Ranen Sen supporter.
- e. Kamal Sarkar, active Communist on the labor front, previously arrested in 1948, a Ranen Sen supporter.
- f. Annada Sankar Bhattacharjee, ex-general secretary of the All-India Students Federation, ex-member of the Bengal PC, a Somnath Lahiri supporter.
- g. Indrajit Gupta, full-time party worker on the labor front, brother of Ranendra Gupta, Home Secretary, West Bengal government,\*\*\*\* a Somnath Lahiri supporter.
- h. Ganesh Ghosh, one of the leaders of the Chittagong Armoury Raid who was converted to Communism in jail, worked on the Kisan Sabha front and formerly had close contact with the now defunct Red Guard (Volunteer) Corps of the CPI. He was arrested in Howrah. His position in the Lahiri-Sen contest has not been determined.

6. These arrests have caused considerable fear among Bengal Communists. The Lahiri-Sen factions are accusing each other of informing to the police\*\*\*\*\* and mutual distrust is making reconciliation more difficult.

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7. B. T. Panadive, G. N. Adhikari, and Bhabani Sen, the real leaders of the old CPI policy, are scheduled to go before a commission of enquiry some time in the future.

8. The rank and file of the Assam Communists oppose Somnath Lahiri and Bireswari Misra for the same reasons that Sen opposes Lahiri. This may have produced a split between the rank and file and the Provincial Committee which consists of Misra supporters.

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Comment. Some interesting details of an opinion poll among the rank and file in connection with the Bengal Provincial Committee can be found

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Comment. It would be an innovation in Communist theory for the General Secretary to consider majority opinion and may be even more difficult for Rao to accede to Sen's idea of elections from below.

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Comment. According to available information, Ranendra Gupta has another brother, Bhupesh (Bhabesh) Gupta. However, of the present report states there is no blood relationship between Bhupesh Gupta and Ranendra Gupta. This inconsistency is being investigated. A report of 31 April 1949 states that Bhupesh Gupta was the president of the Friends of the Soviet, presumably the Bengal Branch. Another report states he is an important Bengal Communist.

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\*\*\*\*\* Comment. There is probably considerable truth in their accusations, and the police are probably exploiting the split.

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